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For Those Who Mourn

Blessed are They that Mourn:
for They shall be Comforted

FOR THOSE WHO MOURN

A Message to the Bereaved
and to all who would
face the fact of death

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THE FORWARD MOVEMENT
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A Personal Testimony

SOME twenty-five years ago, the author of this booklet had occasion to write these words: "Death is the transition from one phase of life to another. Far from marking the *end* of life, it marks the birth into a fuller and more wonderful life than can ever be known upon this earth." He believed that firmly, but never had there been the chance to try it out. It was a conviction born of faith, but a faith that had never been tested. As far as his own experience went, his family circle had never been broken. He had never even 'lost' a friend. If, when trying to comfort another in the face of bereavement, he had been told, "You cannot understand; you have never known death," he would have been forced to admit that he was speaking from theory and not from experience.

Now, all that is changed. He himself has passed through the valley of the shadow of death into which he had seen so many others descend, but himself had only viewed from above. It was given to him to sound deep human suffering. He drank the cup of sorrow that was placed to his lips, but he found there no bitter dregs. He knows the worst that death can do, and has learned that it cannot stand in the face of the best that God can do. And now he can write, not only in faith, but out of the depths of his own experience: "Death marks, not the end of life, but the birth into a life more beautiful and abundant than man can ever know upon this earth."

He has not the feeling that he has discovered something new. He knows that his grief is no greater than that of countless others of God's children. Many have gone this way before him and have seen even greater things than he has seen. But many others there are who walk this way with hearts sore and afraid. It is to these that he would bring some comforting assurance. To inspire them, not with hope, we all can have that—but with the serene confidence that can see through the darkness to the light beyond—enabling them to view death, not as a tragedy, but as a step upward in the God-ward progress of the soul. For that is what it is.

The only time that death appears to take on the nature of tragedy is when it is permitted to mar our perfect trust in God and weaken our realization of His love. The real tragedy of life is not the fact of death; it lies in the loss of this trust and realization of His love. What appears as death from this earthly side is seen, from the other side, to be a birth into that richer life which from the very beginning has always been the soul's true destiny. So

. . . . . we must not say
That those are dead who pass away
From this our world of flesh set free:
We know them living unto Thee.

That we may all have the joy that comes from this knowledge is the prayer that goes forth with this little book.

The Universality of Death

YOUR life running year after year along its accustomed course, smoothly and serenely, tends to develop in you a sense of immunity to tragedy and death. Thousands starve from the famine in India and thousands drown in the flood in China—but these places are far off. Your neighbor down the street dies and you send flowers. You feel sorry for his family, but you continue with your work and play. These things do not happen to you.

Suddenly the bottom drops out of *your* world. It is sudden and unexpected as if a ship struck a rock in the calm of mid-ocean. A crash and sudden death. A deadly germ gets into the blood stream, and all the skill of modern science is helpless to avert the end. The stricken father loses his faith. The heart-broken mother cries out, "Why did this have to happen to me?"

It is hard to answer such a question to the satisfaction and comfort of those who ask it, for the simple reason that at such a time those who ask it are not normal. It is difficult for the mind that is shocked beyond comprehension to be reasonable. The breaking heart wants none of your logic. It wants comfort and peace. Above all, it wants to turn back the page, to recall the life that has sped—and this cannot be.

Probably the real difficulty lies in the fact that we have never realized how true are the familiar words, "In the midst of life we are in death." Those words were written, not to comfort us, but to prepare us for just this very situation. We have always accepted their truth as regards others, but have never quite faced them as true for ourselves. Yet in all gentleness, in all sympathy and love, there can be but one answer to such a question: "Why shouldn't it happen to you as well as to your neighbor down the street? Or the little mother over in China?"

Death is no respecter of persons. It strikes here, it strikes there. It comes as the result of carelessness, unavoidable accidents, disease, or even over-carefulness. Sometimes, we cannot tell why it comes. It comes at last to us all, to the good and the bad, to the saint and the sinner. To ask, "What have *I* done to deserve this?" implies that no doubt your neighbor down the way did something to deserve his sorrow. Worse still, it is a reflection upon the goodness and fairness of God, a thing we would not suggest in our more normal moments. Death comes to you and yours as it has come to millions of others—*it is inevitable*. It may come upon you as a thief in the night, or it may approach slowly and after ample warning. It may come early in life, or after many years of happiness. But come it must. The only way to escape it is never to be born.

This truth is not stated with any belief that its acceptance will make of death a burden less grievous to be borne. It is given simply as one of the inescapable facts of life which we must learn to face. Let us be fair with God. We know He is fair with us. What right have we to hope to avoid that which we know to be His plan for all mankind? If we can make this adjustment now, it will help us when the real testing time comes.

The Naturalness of Death

MUCH of our horror of death comes from the feeling (even though it may never be expressed) that it is the enemy of life. We love life; therefore it is natural to dread death. But death is no more the enemy of life than sleep is the enemy of work and play. Sleep makes it possible for us to work and play the next day. Death makes it possible for us to live on. It has therefore a real contribution to make to life in the large, being the gate-way through which we slip from the lower life into the higher, from the briefer into that which is eternal.

If life on this earth were all that we were ever to know, then the death of our loved ones would be the end of everything for them, in which case we might well wish it could be so for us. But we know it is not

that. Everything our Lord ever told us should lead us to believe that death is a thing of little consequence in view of the deeper and more wonderful realities of that greater Life of which it is the entrance.

It is conceivable that God could have planned things differently had He desired. He might have given us a life that need never know physical death. He might have made it possible for us to inherit the great things He has prepared for us in some other way than through the process we call death. He might have made a detour around the grave. But we should trust Him enough to believe that He has done what is best for us.

What if we do not now understand? Is it really necessary that we should? When we see that Jesus could find His risen life only through the grave, can we ask anything other for ourselves or for those we love? Death is but the God-planned end of this earthly life, and the God-planned beginning of that greater and eternal life which we crave for ourselves and our loved ones. It is the link between the two—and in the light of eternity, how can it matter greatly whether it comes a few years sooner or a few years later? To see the naturalness of death brings us another step nearer to the Christian understanding of it and attitude toward it.

The Acceptance of Death

WE do not necessarily draw our Christian attitudes from the teaching of the Old Testament. But there is a sweet reasonableness in the words of Job: "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" It matters not that Job was mistaken in his belief that evil came from the hand of God as well as good. The point is that having enjoyed the love of his children for many years, Job had no sense of rebellion, no word of complaint, nor did he charge God foolishly when misfortune came.

It is difficult for us to be thus patient and submissive, even to what we recognize as inevitable. Yet there is nothing to be gained by shrinking from the pain of it or by attempting to run away from it altogether—and there *is* much to be lost. To rebel against our 'unhappy fate' (as it is sometimes called) is really to rebel against God, for death is a part of God's plan for life.

To rebel is to place ourselves in a position where we bear our grief alone and unaided; it creates a great gulf between God and ourselves, and God cannot help a rebellious heart. To run away from it and seek to lose ourselves in an orgy of senseless and nervous activity does not touch the problem at all. It is too much like taking an opiate to relieve pain. At the best, it is only a temporary relief. It does not reach the

source of pain, and leaves one in a worse state than before. And certainly, the more we delude ourselves, the more unbearable the truth becomes.

Even 'perfect submission,' however patient, is not enough. I have seen all these ways tried, but I have never yet seen any of them bring real comfort, or answer a single question. The only way for a Christian to meet sorrow is as His Master met it—calmly and courageously, with head unbowed and heart unafraid—knowing, as He knew, that life's deepest, truest meaning is found, not on this side, but on the other side of Calvary. And the glorious part of it all is that even the weakest and most ignorant among us can find this courage if we will keep open the way for Him Who would give it to us.

The Problem of Pain

I WANT to say a brief word about the so-called problem of pain. Much has been written about it. It has troubled many persons greater and wiser than myself. There is an answer, to be found perhaps only by those who themselves have suffered. All others can only speculate upon the matter. The pain of Calvary can be known only by those who have endured it. But by the same token, it is these who can best learn the meaning of life through the things they have suffered. And it is not until we have known death that we can know the fulness

of truth that is brought to us in the fact of the resurrected and glorified life.

There is no more a 'problem' of pain than there is a problem of faded flowers or of a clouded sky. God has made this so clear to us that there can be no ground to question it. It is only as we skim along the surface of life that we have the feeling that life should be all sunshine. But when we really begin to live it, we learn that suffering and love are twined so closely together that we cannot wrench the one from the other. The greatest happiness and the deepest sorrow are but a thread apart. We plunge from the heights of the one into the depths of the other in shorter time than it takes to tell it.

If love brings us the greatest happiness this life can know, then bereavement must bring its corresponding sorrow. But is there any who would lose the one in order to escape the other? The more we love, the more we are capable of suffering. Would any of us be willing never to suffer if it meant that we would never have known the meaning of love? How great is God's gift to us, in the gift of children! They are true evidence of His love for us, in that He has shared with us His own creative power. Would any of us refuse that gift because of the knowledge that some day we shall have to surrender it? The capacity for grief is as much from God as the capacity for love —and we have not really lived until we have sounded them both.

And so the 'problem' is not in the fact of pain. It exists only in our own lives. In the weakness of our lives. In our inability (but perhaps more often, our refusal) to look the facts of life squarely in the face, and realize that it takes the shadows as well as the lights to make a beautiful picture. And so the great tragedy of life is not that we are called upon to suffer when those we love are taken away from us, but that we fail to look through the suffering to Him Who changeth not—who is closest to us, *when* we suffer. And we best learn that love in those dark and helpless moments when we are most conscious of our own weakness.

Mystery Made Plain

QUESTIONS may be asked either in the spirit of rebellion or in the humble desire for understanding and knowledge. God does not mind our asking questions. He cannot help us much if we turn from Him in resentment or despair, but He does want us to understand, and He will gladly share His knowledge with us to the fullest extent which we ourselves make possible.

And so we come to the question which perhaps all of us have asked, but which all of us have not tried to think through: "I know that God is good. Why then does He permit things to happen which bring such sorrow to those whom He loves?"

Never for one moment think that suffering is visited upon us as a sign of God's

displeasure. That explanation was shattered once and for all when our Lord revealed God to us as a Father of Love. To be sure, much suffering does come as the result of sin, and we feel that there is a natural relation between the two. But it is not always possible to trace any close connection between sorrow and sin. Indeed, in many instances, we know that there is no connection. I have known people who tried to console themselves with the thought, "I loved him too much; perhaps that is why God took him away." That is too horrible a thing to contemplate. But there is an answer which to me is perfectly clear, and I hope I can make it clear to you.

The purpose of this life is to prepare us for the Life Eternal. Character can be developed only through the freedom of the will. We are born into this life with almost limitless possibilities. But these can be realized only as we exercise those powers which lead to their development. After showing us what is true and right and good, God throws us on our own, as it were, that of our own choice we will come to love truth, do right, and live nobly. He will help us, but He knows that we learn best by doing. He rejoices when we succeed; He suffers when we fail. But when we make mistakes we must face the consequences, and it is hard for Him to help us at all in those times when we misuse (or fail to use) the powers He has given us.

This process is not unfamiliar to parents, for we follow the same method in seeking to develop our own children. When my child is young and helpless, I do everything for him and try to shield him from every possible danger. But little by little, I thrust him forward, that he may learn to do things for himself. I take his little hand in mine, and together we go off to kindergarten, because I know he is incapable of coping with the dangers of traffic alone. After he becomes more familiar with the route, I pause mid-way and watch him go the rest of the way alone. I tell him to look both ways before crossing the street, and then watch to see that he does it. Finally, I tell him what a little man he is, and that he is big enough now to go to school by himself. I send him forth alone—and as he disappears around the corner, I pray that he may be preserved from all harm.

What have I done? I have deliberately sent my child forth into danger—but not, of course, until I believed him sufficiently developed to meet such situations as might arise. It is for his own good that I have done this, certainly not for my own convenience or peace of mind. The only alternative would be to keep him forever by my side, and this I know I cannot do. One day he sees a friend across the street, and forgetting for the moment all that I have told him, he rushes heedlessly across—and steps right in front of a passing automobile.

Now what are the elements involved in this chain of circumstances? There was no evidence of displeasure on my part toward the child. There was no sin involved, except in so far as forgetfulness may be thought of as a sin. It was not because I loved him too greatly. No one says, "I know his father loved him. Why then did he permit such a thing to happen?" Everyone knows that I had no desire in the world except for what was best for my child. The accident was the result of chance; an unhappy combination of circumstances. The accident involved me as well as my child. It was a situation that was inevitably wrapped up in the broad plan whereby I had hoped to develop the latent possibilities that I knew lay within him, that he might live his life fruitfully and abundantly.

Thus it is that God deals with us. That is why He 'permits' such things to happen.

Victory in Death

"SHE was so young, so full of life. Why did God have to take her away?"

"He was just at the height of his career. Why could he not have finished his work?" Such questions, when seriously asked, can imply but one thing: the belief that death marks a loss, a distinct downward step in the possibilities of living. I am sure none of us believes this, as a general rule. It is only when we are confronted with specific cases

—particularly, when we ourselves feel the sense of personal loss—that questions like these come to the surface.

The truth of the matter is, we are all so earth-bound in our emotions and vision and experience, that it is impossible for some, and difficult for all to realize the nature and the extent of the possibilities of the future life. We see through a glass darkly. But we do see: and even the little that we see should make it clear that whatever life may have been on this earth, death invariably opens up to it the greater possibilities of the life beyond.

Life is continuous. It begins with earthly birth and can continue on forever into the future. That is one phase of what we mean by 'eternal' life. When death comes to a person we love, it means that such a person has arrived at the point of transition from this physically limited life to that greater and fuller life that knows no such limitations. Instead of thinking of it as the 'end' of everything, we should think of it as the beginning of something. In the truest and most literal sense, it marks one's graduation from the lower form into a higher. Who ever says, "My child was the brightest member of his class. Why did he have to graduate?"

Death means just this. Beyond question, it has been for many the one way of release from burdens and pain that were too

great to be borne. For others, it may have meant escape from suffering that might have come to them later in life. Certainly it meant that they were saved such sorrow as has come into our own lives. But these are the negative aspects of death. What is there on the positive side? Is there any real truth in the words of St. Paul, "For me . . . to die is gain"?

Indeed there is. If those whom we have in mind loved life here, they love it all the more where they are. If theirs were lives given in unselfish service to their fellow-men, they are now 'going from strength to strength in the life of perfect service.' If we thought their lives beautiful and admirable even amid the physical limitations of this earthly life, how much more beautiful are they now, free of these limitations?

Love does not cease when we 'die.' Thoughts do no perish. Growth does not come to an end. Beauty does not vanish away. If God be all that we believe Him to be, their lives are bound to be richer and happier. The only grief they can know is caused by our failure to understand. Let us not bring them that.

Moreover, we need not lose all contact with our loved ones when they die. If we believe in *life* after death—and there is no fact of which our Lord has given us greater assurance—surely we must believe also in *love* after death. My mother prayed for me

when she was living; surely if she is still living she is still praying for me. I cannot imagine her not doing so. Moreover, I may continue to pray for her since she is in the nearer presence of God, and surely it is appropriate for me still to commend her to His care.

Whenever we take part in that greatest act of personal and corporate worship, the Holy Communion, we remember the blessed dead in our prayers. In that great intercession for the whole state of Christ's Church we ask God's special blessing upon them as the priest uses these beautiful words: "And we also bless Thy Holy name for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear; beseeching Thee to grant them continual growth in Thy love and service and to give us grace so to follow their good examples that with them we may be partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom."*

If we look at life in the large, (which is the way God looks at it and wants us to look at it) can it matter greatly whether this moment, that marks the passing from one phase to another, comes a few years sooner or a few years later? After all, the real measure of any life is its *quality* and not its

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*The Prayer Book contains other beautiful intercessions for the departed that we may well use in our private devotions, notably those on pages 268, 334, and 335, and the one, "For an anniversary of one departed" in the section on Family Prayer near the end of the book.

earthly *duration*. There can be no sting in death for the child of God—only victory—victory over the toil and pain of this earthly life. Sometimes, the victory comes only after the toil and pain are experienced. Sometimes it is won before ever the toil and pain are known. But in either case, it is victory—won with or without the struggle.

Forward Through Bereavement

THE workman who is sure of his skill does not mind having his work tested. Rather he invites it. We are not called upon to welcome sorrow. Our Lord Himself prayed to be delivered from His own cup of bitterness—until He became convinced that the will of His Father was that He should meet His Calvary. Then I feel sure that His prayers became a prayer for strength. It is not God's will that we should remain cold and unmoved when the shadow of death crosses our path. We are not dull clods. It is no sin to sorrow, but only 'to sorrow as those who have no hope.' We can find happiness in the knowledge that our faith and trust in God have withstood the extreme test of personal bereavement.

We come at last to the conclusion that just as the so-called 'problem' of pain resolves itself into a problem within our own lives, so the real problem with regard to death is not with those who have gone on,

but in the lives of us who are left here to carry on until we go to join them.

Let nothing I have written lead any one to hope that the day will come in this earthly life when the sense of bereavement will cease to be. God Himself does not promise that. Joy cometh in the morning, and it is only in the life beyond that God wipes away *all* tears.

The sharp anguish of the first few days or months will pass away, but the feeling of loss, *our* loss, will be with us as long as this life lasts. When life deals us such a wound as this, the scar will continue to throb and ache during periods of the soul's bad weather. But time does heal—which is but another way of saying that God does lead us gradually into readjustments and fuller understanding of the meaning of it all.

Yes, and the possibilities of it all. For if God gives us life, then He must mean that sorrow, which is so inevitably a part of life, should be permitted to make its contribution for the good of the soul. For therein lies its only meaning, its only value.

It is a sad commentary on human nature that so many of us should go through life with only the most casual recognition of Him Who has given us all the good things we enjoy. We come to take them for granted.

Prosperity brings the spirit of self-suffi-

ciency. Success breeds over-confidence. Like the Israelites of old, we sit down to eat and drink, and rise up to play, with all too little realization of the deepest needs of our own selves. Summoned suddenly to face the grim side of life, we find that we have not the courage to do it alone. We have not the strength to meet it unaided. The plain truth is that, of ourselves, we are not equal to this life.

It is only in such a crisis that we realize what has always been true: our sufficiency is of God. And in our utter helplessness we find ourselves being drawn to Him just as the little child, facing the first real sorrow of his life, throws himself sobbing upon his mother's knees to empty his soul of its anguish, and draw in that sustaining strength which Love imparts. The deepest experiences of this life are found, not in pleasure, but in pain. We see God best, not through our laughter but through our tears. How can we say that sorrow has not its use?

The Communion of Saints

BY the way of such sorrow as this we are led into one of the richest experiences the Christian can have: the Communion of Saints. This phrase, familiar as it is, is just an article of the Creed, a doctrine of the Church, to thousands of us. But the Communion of Saints was a fact of life long before it became a doctrine. The Church

teaches it as a truth, but we become alive to it when we develop the capacity for spiritual living.

To countless numbers of Christians the reality of the Communion of Saints has been an unfailing source of love and joy in the face of otherwise heart-breaking bereavement. Until others find their way into this reality, the Communion of Saints must remain for them an untouched blessing, though so near.

The disciples were in despair when the bodily form of their Master was taken from them. But when they came to see that He was with them forever, joy drove away all despair. His new-found, resurrection Presence was more to them than even the old beloved companionship in Galilee. When we discover with them this life-transforming secret, we begin to understand the meaning and know the joy of the Communion of Saints.

For it is the Living Christ who creates and guarantees this joyful fact. It is Christ —and not just our wistful hoping—Who assures us that nothing can pluck out of His hand those who loved Him and trusted Him. Our faith here rests not in any idea of the mere prolonging of existence. It is "Because I live, ye shall live also." Wherever there is Christlikeness—all of that beauty and blessing, all that goodness and love which binds us to our dear ones—we may

be sure it is His, and He treasures it; that He will never let it be separated from Him, never let it fall.

We cannot declare exactly what details of our life here below our beloved departed share with us; whether they see, as we see, every item of daily life, our little cares and successes, our problems and tears, our laughter and joys. They may be like elders working upstairs at some greater task, simply confident that for the time we are working at ours in the world below, serene in the certainty that we are in the same house of life, safe in the same keeping. The great thing is that we are one and not separated, that the one great Love is the center of all our lives.

When we are bereft of our dear ones, it is a tremendous shock. For a time we are stunned. Not everyone can feel at once their continuing companionship. We should not for that reason fall into despair. An adjustment must take place in our lives, reaching deep into our habits, emotions and thoughts.

A few souls—prepared and disciplined—may make this adjustment quickly. For most of us it comes slowly and hard; many an hour filled with loneliness and agonizing doubt. We may best come to a sense of the continuing presence of those whose bodily form is withdrawn, by realizing the promised presence of our Living Lord. As we

seek and find Him, we find the dear departed. They are with Him and we find the reality of their continued life through Him.

Thus the Holy Communion comes to have a greater added meaning. In the unfailing Presence, there we are in the Communion of Saints. There, in the prayer for the whole state of Christ's Church we remember our loved ones who have gone before, as well as those who remain in this life. There, when we kneel to receive the blessed sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, we know that we are not only in His presence but are also very close to them.

Our dear ones are not gone beyond recall like the dead stalks of last summer's grain. They live and know and pray and worship in the nearer presence of God. "In my father's house are many mansions" said our Lord. "I go to prepare a place for you that where I am, there ye may be also." We can still remember those loved ones who have gone before, in our prayers and in the sacrament of Holy Communion. God has not forgotten them and they have not forgotten us. They are one with us in adoring Him whose gift is eternal life—"Who in the multitude of Thy Saints hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses, that we rejoicing in their fellowship, may win the race that is set before us, and, together with them, may receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away."

What else remains? Certainly one other thing. We are His living witnesses. Surely we should count it a privilege to bear witness to what has been for us the richest experience of life. Somewhere—perhaps right in the midst of our own intimate circle of friends—there are those keenly in need of just the thing we have found. They have descended into the darkness of the shadow of death and can find no way out. Still lost in the "encircling gloom," their souls cry out for the light that guides our steps, and for the peace that we have found. Life can bring us few greater joys than that of sharing with those who need it the new and richer meaning of life which has come to us through our own experience. And we who no longer seek our living among the dead, we who know that

. . . . henceforth is death
But the gate of life immortal

shall find that it is a joy which no man taketh from us. We shall come to know increasingly as the years pass by, that we have not lost those who have outstripped us in life's journey. We simply have them safe.

Twelve Prayers

FOR CONFIDENT HOPE

Eternal and unchangeable God, in whom alone we find rest for our weariness and comfort for our sorrow, and from whom alone cometh all true joy; keep our hearts, we beseech thee, ever fixed on thee through life and death, waiting patiently for that glorious day when we shall rejoice in the fulness of thy love for evermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE LAND OF LIGHT AND JOY

O God, whose mercies cannot be numbered, accept our prayers on behalf of the soul of thy servant departed, and grant *him* an entrance into the land of light and joy, in the fellowship of thy saints; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FOR THE BEREAVED

O Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ did weep at the grave of Lazarus his friend: Look, we beseech thee, with compassion upon those who are now in sorrow and affliction; comfort them, O Lord, with thy gracious consolations; make them to know that all things work together for good to them that love thee; and grant them evermore sure trust and confidence in thy fatherly care; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FOR THOSE WE LOVE

Almighty God, we entrust all who are dear to us to thy never-failing care and love, for this life and the life to come; knowing that thou art doing for them better things than we can desire or pray for; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

LIGHT AND PEACE

O Eternal Lord God, who holdest all souls in life, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to thy whole Church in paradise and on earth, thy light and thy peace; and grant that we, following the good examples of those who have served thee here and are now at rest, may at the last enter with them into thine unending joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

O God the King of saints, we praise and magnify thy holy Name for all thy servants who have finished their course in thy faith and fear; for the Blessed Virgin Mary, for the holy Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs, and for all other thy righteous servants; and we beseech thee that, encouraged by their example, strengthened by their fellowship, and aided by their prayers, we may attain unto everlasting life; through the merits of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. [*From the Book of Common Prayer of the Scottish Episcopal Church.*]

FOR AN ANNIVERSARY OF ONE DEPARTED

Almighty God, we remember this day before thee thy faithful servant (*N.*), and we pray thee that, having opened to *him* the gates of larger life, thou wilt receive *him* more and more into thy joyful service; that *he* may win, with thee and thy servants everywhere, the eternal victory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FOR OUR BELOVED DEPARTED

O Father of all, we pray to thee for those we love, but see no longer. Grant them thy peace; let light perpetual shine upon them; and in thy loving wisdom and almighty power work in them the good purpose of thy perfect will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

Remember thy servant, O Lord, according to the favor which thou bearest unto thy people, and grant that, increasing in knowledge and love of thee, *he* may go from strength to strength in the life of perfect service, in thy heavenly kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

FOR ONE WELL KNOWN

We seem to give *him* back to thee, dear Lord, who gavest *him* to us. Yet as thou didst not lose *him* in giving, so we have not lost *him* by *his* return. For what is thine is ours always; and life is eternal and love is immortal; and what we sometimes call death is only a horizon, and a horizon is nothing but the limit of our sight. Lift us up, O God, that we may see further; cleanse our eyes that we may see more clearly; draw us closer to thyself that we may know ourselves nearer to our beloved who are with thee, that where they are, and thou art, we too may be; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FOR GRACE TO FOLLOW

O Almighty God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord; grant us grace so to follow thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys which thou hast prepared for those who unfeignedly love thee; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMMENDATION OF A PASSING SOUL

Depart, O Christian soul, out of this world,
In the Name of God the Father Almighty who created thee;
In the Name of Jesus Christ who redeemed thee;
In the Name of the Holy Ghost who sanctifieth thee.
May thy rest be this day in peace, and thy dwelling-place in the paradise of God. Amen.

How can I cease to pray for thee? Somewhere
In God's great universe thou art to-day.
Can he not reach thee with his tender care?
Can he not hear me when for thee I pray?

What matters it to him who holds within
The hollow of his hands all worlds, all space,
That thou art done with earthly pain and sin?
Somewhere within his ken thou hast a place.

Somewhere thou livest, and hast need of him;
Somewhere thy soul sees higher heights to climb;
And somewhere still there may be valleys dim
That thou must pass to reach the hills sublime.

Then all the more, e'en if thou canst not hear
Poor human words of blessing, will I pray.
O true, brave heart! God bless thee, wheresoe'er
In God's great universe thou art to-day!

Mrs. J. R. C. Dorr, 1825-1913.

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